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Jun 18th 2019

Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

There is a host of reasons why deregulation would be damaging to this country--its individuals, its communities, and its citizens.

As a consumer, I have experienced the horrible service and exorbitant prices that are the result of little or no competition in the broadband sector. Comcast, the biggest provider in our community, charged us the limit of what we could afford, and was consistently unresponsive when we encountered problems of one kind or another. Representatives I spoke to were either rude, overworked, spoke and understood English poorly, and seemed badly trained, at least 80% of the time. There was no way out for us as consumers, except to opt out--and that is not a true option for any working person, anyone with family and friends who are far away, anyone who wants to be engaged with the world in any way. The feeling of powerlessness is awful--and reminds me the years I spent in Communist China. I learned firsthand that fair competition is one of the cornerstones of democracy.

The advent of choice--the appearance of a fiber network in our area--has been a revelation: we have enjoyed the support of well-trained, courteous, and always-available customer service reps, flawless internet and phone service, and wonderfully low prices. There is no reason in this country why we should be forced to lose these advantages, except for pure greed on the part of politicians and corporate executives.

As a citizen, I also understand that one of the things that helped build this country was the systemic encouragement of innovation: the motor behind the kinds of leaps in technology, in institutions, and in cultural enterprises that lead us into the future, and help make a better world for our kids. By deregulating the broadband sector, we are allowing one of the most important segments of our society to slip into a mode that discourages innovation, squelches invention, and silences the voices of those who still need new solutions.

The most dangerous aspect of this shift to a deregulated broadband network is the further fragmentation of an already severely fragmented society: ensuring that only the haves have access to information and communication resources, ensuring that there is really only one source of

information...this is what the FCC was founded to prevent.

I doubt that this letter will matter, but I could not resist the opportunity to at least add my voice.

Paula Varsano